

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR DYNAMIC DEGRADATION DETECTION

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ABSTRACT

Methods and apparatus for automatically detecting when a memory system has significantly degraded are disclosed. According to one aspect of the present invention, a method for determining a status associated with a memory system which includes a plurality of sectors includes updating a counter, comparing the counter to a threshold value, and generating an appropriate indication when comparing the counter to the threshold value yields a first result. The counter is updated each time a sector is reassigned, and indicates a number of sectors remaining in the memory system. The threshold value indicates a number of sectors which are yet to be reassigned in order for the memory system to be considered as useable, or reliable. The indication is generated when comparing the counter to the threshold value yields a first result to indicate that the memory system is substantially near a failure condition.